

today's energy to significantly improve the lives of our people.

What we are seeing in the State are several communities working with various State agencies to integrate wind, solar, and geothermal into their electricity delivery system in an effort to displace the power that is normally generated from expensive diesel. It is the microgrids that we are seeing that are coming to be found as the solution. We are home to more microgrids in the State of Alaska than any other State out there. That is largely because they are the only option for us. They are the only option for many of our communities that lie far outside any regional transmission grid. We have transmission grids in what we call the Railbelt area. But it is difficult when you have large geography and small population numbers. So you are going to have to figure out how you can literally power one village at a time or maybe you get lucky and you are able to cluster a few.

But knowing what, for instance, the island of Kodiak has done with being able to power a major seafood-producing port through wind, combined with their hydro resources and also utilizing batteries—that area in Kodiak is almost 100 percent powered by renewable resources. This, again, is one of the major seafood-producing ports not only in the State but in the country. So the energy that is needed for those processes is coming to us by renewable energy sources—almost 100 percent. The irony—and we were able to talk about this briefly in the energy committee this morning—is that in order to meet increased demand in Kodiak, they are going to need to expand one of their hydro facilities, Terror Lake, and so they have asked for assistance with that. If they cannot get the expansion, which some are objecting to because they don't want to see an expansion of that dam, what will happen? You go back to diesel. You go back to diesel. That is not the answer here.

So what we have been doing with pioneering of our microgrids is something that I think provides States and the Federal Government with ample opportunities to conduct research and develop solutions to better integrate renewable technologies into these microgrids. In order for renewable technologies to be effective in the State, innovative research and development is required, and I think the result of those efforts has made a dramatic difference in many communities.

Bringing renewables online in remote communities like Kodiak has displaced hundreds of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel, not only saving the people who live there hundreds of thousands of dollars but resulting in a cleaner environment overall.

I do think it is exciting to think about what a difference future innovations in renewable technologies and energy storage could mean for communities not only in a place like Alaska

but really around our country and around the world. Whether it is through Federal research and development, whether it is through our State programs that are assisting our private capital, promoting innovation is a clear path to lower energy costs and a future with cleaner water and cleaner air.

We might not agree on every energy policy that comes to this Chamber, but I hope we can all agree that energy innovation is one key to ensuring our economic growth, our national security, as well as our international competitiveness. I look forward to working with colleagues in all of these areas.

With that, I see that my friend and colleague from Kansas—a gentleman who is always filled with thanksgiving and who has shared that with many of us today—is here on the floor, and so I will yield at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Alaska for her kind comments, her advice, and her help on several important issues we have worked on together. I hope she enjoyed the Thanksgiving meal we had—I guess it is called the Thursday lunch bunch.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEES

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the French Government for taking aggressive and appropriate action to arrest and kill the terrorists responsible for last Friday's vicious attack in Paris that resulted in 129 killed and over 300 wounded. We all pray for the full recovery of those wounded and note that everywhere within our country we see the American flag at half staff, along with many displaying the flag of our ally France.

The good news today is that the mastermind of several terrorist plots and the plot that killed so many last Friday is dead. Abdelhamid Abaaoud is dead in the same fashion as his victims. So be it. Viva la France! Continuer le combat! Keep up the fight.

As our Nation memorializes those who perished in France, it is the absolute wrong time for President Obama and this administration to be putting forth a plan to relocate Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. mainland—the absolute wrong time.

Now we learn that the administration has delayed the much-publicized but secret plan to close Guantanamo and bring terrorists to the United States. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, "I don't have any additional guidance for you but the plan will come relatively soon." He has been saying that for some time. Others think the plan could even be released while the President is gone for the G20 meeting in Turkey. As a personal aside, I might suggest he try to move the terrorists there. The reason Presi-

dent Obama delayed the plan is that we had a terrorist attack in France. France has gone to war. The United States is on high alert. Apparently he has tossed this decision and public announcement regarding the plan to the Department of Defense, which has stated there is nothing imminent. Thank goodness for that.

Now, beyond the security threat this poses to our communities in Kansas and in South Carolina or Colorado—the sites which this administration has surveyed for potential relocation—there has been no intelligence assessment regarding the danger of moving enemy combatants from Guantanamo to the United States. That is amazing. The question is, How can the administration ask Kansans or Coloradans or South Carolinians or any Americans to paint a bull's-eye on their community without providing assurances that moving detainees to the United States will not pose a threat to them or our national security? It seems unfathomable, yet this President is proposing to do just that.

This President's unending affinity for Executive orders risks overriding his Attorney General's view of the law, the advice of those at the Department of Defense, especially those close to Fort Leavenworth, and military law enforcement. It goes against the will of the Congress, which voted in this body 91 to 3 to maintain a prohibition on moving detainees to the mainland.

There is absolutely no intelligence to support the move—none. In short, the Senate, Congress, Department of Defense, the Attorney General, and the American people have spoken.

Yesterday I wrote Department of Defense Secretary Carter to ask whether an intelligence report has been done to support the administration's claims that Guantanamo Bay is a recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Some people believe that. Common sense tells you, however, that moving detainees to the mainland would be a greater recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. I asked if an assessment showed detainment in the United States would decrease recruiting or did an intelligence product show that national security threats would decrease if any enemy combatants are held in the United States. From my discussions with Members of this body on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the answer is that they have no comprehensive intelligence assessment.

Simply put, an assessment regarding the transfers of detainees to the mainland has not been done. So I have asked Secretary Carter and the Department of Defense to ensure that an assessment is completed. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and reckless. How can the President of the United States allow ISIS to paint a target on those who live near what would become Gitmo North? No community in the United States wants that label.

Fort Leavenworth, in particular, is not a suitable replacement for Gitmo.

It is the intellectual center of the Army. It hosts our Nation's best and brightest warfighters at the Command and General Staff College, which also hosts 100 international officers every year.

I want to remind my colleagues just how important Fort Leavenworth's mission is to the Army and to our national security and of the risk that this entire mission would be endangered by making it a terrorist prison.

Fort Leavenworth is home to the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command Combined Arms Center. The Combined Arms Center oversees 13 schools, including the Command and General Staff College. Most recently, Fort Leavenworth was named the "Army University," giving our intellectual center of the Army an official title. Since 1881, the Command and General Staff College and the Combined Arms Center have been engaged in the primary mission of preparing the Army and its leaders for war.

In order to accomplish critical missions, Fort Leavenworth develops and integrates Army leader development, doctrine education, lessons learned, functional training, training support, training development, and proponent responsibilities in order to support mission command and to prepare the Army to successfully conduct unified land operations in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational environment—a lot of words. It is a big mission, an important mission. To degrade Fort Leavenworth to a terrorist prison would have ominous repercussions to our professional military and the value it serves every American and our national security.

In addition, we must consider how our allies will respond to having enemy combatants so close to their top military leaders training at Fort Leavenworth. In my effort to reach out to Embassies tied to the school, all have expressed their deep support for the International Military Officers Division, its value to their military and security, and the importance of maintaining the program at Fort Leavenworth. There is every possibility that the countries that participate in the Command and General Staff College would reconsider their participation given the relocation of terrorists. This would bring negative consequences and represent a terrible detriment to the partnership building that takes place during their course work. It would mean a loss of international cooperation for American military education and our national security.

There are so many imperative factors that must be examined at Fort Leavenworth, in Colorado, and in South Carolina, factors that we cannot ignore. The fact that the FBI has nearly 1,000 investigations into ISIS activity within the United States and all 50 States, that ISIS released a video right after the attacks in Paris stating that the United States was next, and, most important, the fact that we are not deal-

ing with everyday criminals—the detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay are enemy combatants, terrorists, individuals with no remorse, and with a recidivism of 30 percent and a strong desire to return to the battlefield. The reality is, these individuals and the organizations they support pose the greatest risk to national security we face today.

This administration should not obstruct the will of Congress reflecting the voice of the American people, which has prohibited this White House from transferring detainees from Gitmo to the United States every year since 2009 when we first won this battle. We won the battle back then. Why do we have to repeat it now?

If the President believes he can act without consequences, he is wrong. Again, 91 Senators voted in favor of this prohibition just last week when we passed the National Defense Authorization Act. That is not just a majority, that is a veto-proof majority. Article II of the Constitution does not provide this President—any President—with the power to ignore the law.

Just the other night in a tele-town-hall meeting, caller after caller asked if the President's actions are constitutional. The question was, How can the President do this when Congress has prohibited funding? In my view and that of the President's own Attorney General, if the President acts by Executive order, he is acting unconstitutionally.

I agree with our Founding Fathers such as George Mason who said "When the same man, or set of men, holds the sword and the purse, there is an end of liberty" and James Madison who said it is "particularly dangerous to give the keys of the treasury and the command of the army, into the same hands."

I have mentioned the Congress, the merits of Ft. Leavenworth, the Constitution, but what I have not mentioned yet are our servicemembers. We have asked so much of our men and women in uniform over the past 14 years. We have asked them to go into harm's way before every bit of equipment was ready. We have asked them to deploy and redeploy with almost no dwell time. We have asked them to extend their stays, and we have put them in more places across the globe than any period in history. They have done it all without hesitation or complaint because we have the best fighting force in the history of the world.

I am unwilling to ask them to take on the challenge of guarding enemy combatants in the United States and put their families at risk for harassment, kidnapping, or other tactics homegrown terrorists and foreign fighters have used or will use. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines do not live anonymously when their families are stationed with them, as is the case at Ft. Leavenworth.

I believe, along with many who have worn the uniform, that the attacks in

Benghazi may have broken the Nation's promise to never leave a man in harm's way. On a personal note, when I signed up to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, I was told that if I was in harm's way, I would never be left behind. That is what the Marine Corps could do for me. The Corps would have my back either by squad—if I got in harm's way—or they would send the platoon or the company or the battalion or the regiment or the division or the whole Marine Corps, and I believed that. I still believe it as the senior marine in the Congress. The Marines would have my back.

It has been the same for generations before me and hopefully generations after—that is, until now. If we are going to ask our men and women to fight ISIS or to put their families at risk, they have to know that we have their backs.

Until that bond is restored and we have a President who is willing to lead instead of following, our Nation remains vulnerable to every terrorist organization and cell in the world. We must put national security back as our top priority. It must be our first duty in Congress and by the Commander in Chief.

I stand on the floor because America's national security is my top priority. Bringing Guantanamo Bay detainees to the United States is not putting our Nation's security above politics, campaign promises, or anything else.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

FUNDING VETERANS PROGRAMS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the best way to fight this war on terrorism is to give the President of the United States the tools he has asked for and he needs. Part of that is fully funding support for veterans.

The Presiding Officer sits on the Veterans' Affairs Committee with me. He stood side by side with most of us on funding veterans programs.

Some of my colleagues haven't. They are happy to send people off to war and spend all the money we need but are not so generous when it comes to taking care of our men and women when they return. There are higher suicide rates, higher head injury rates, higher drug addiction rates, and higher unemployment than regular civilians. Yet people in this body, especially the tea party in the House of Representatives, sometimes don't seem to be able to find the money to spend to help veterans.

NOMINATION OF ADAM SZUBIN

Mr. BROWN. Another way to fight this war on terrorism and to help our efforts on fighting ISIS is to actually put the people in place in the U.S. Government who help us do that. I came to the floor today to join Senator CASEY—my friend from Pennsylvania who is